



SOUTH CAROLINA

Introduction and General Description

South Carolina's physiographic regions include a small portion of Blue Ridge in the northwest, with the reminder roughly half Piedmont and half Coastal Plain divided by the fall line Sandhills.

The State contains 48 natural communities. Bottomland hardwood forests remain along the major watersheds of the Savannah, Santee, and Pee Dee Rivers, as well as the Ashepoo-Combahee-Edisto (ACE) Basin. The Coastal Plain contains many blackwater streams including the Edisto River which is the longest blackwater stream in the United States. Bald cypress-water tupelo swamps are common along coastal plain rivers and the coast contains vast areas of salt marsh with remnants of maritime forest.

South Carolina has 7 national wildlife refuges: Carolina Sandhills, Santee, Waccamaw, Cape Romain, ACE Basin, Pinckney Island, and Savannah.

Habitats of Special Concern

Longleaf Pine Habitat

Longleaf pine ecosystems are among the most species-rich plant communities outside the tropics. Longleaf pine habitat in South Carolina has greatly declined as it



Longleaf pine on Good Hope Plantation in Jasper County.

has throughout its historical range in the Southeast. Approximately 369,000 acres of longleaf habitat remain in the State, primarily in the outer Coastal Plain and in the Sandhills. The longleaf pine ecosystem provides habitat for a variety of species including the federally endangered red-cockaded woodpecker.

Bottomland Hardwood Forests

The remaining bottomland hardwood wetlands are productive ecosystems that have a variety of habitats for wildlife. They are particularly important as breeding and wintering sites for migratory birds, habitat for aquatic species, and for maintaining water quality.

Carolina Bays

Carolina bays are shallow, isolated wetlands with unique geomorphic features. Carolina bays are scattered throughout the Coastal Plain. They provide habitat for a

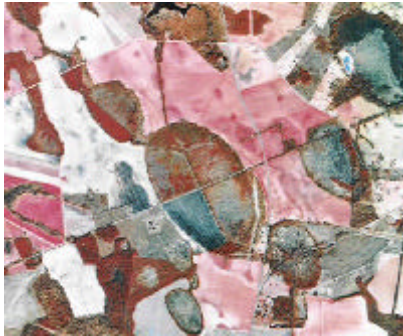
wide range of plants and animals, some of which are endangered. At least 36 plant species considered rare in South Carolina grow in Carolina bays. Two of these species, Canby's dropwort and Harperella, have been listed as federally endangered. Most of the populations of Venus flytrap found in South Carolina are associated with Carolina bays. Bays provide excellent habitat for many amphibian species including the endangered flatwoods salamander. The dense vegetation of certain types of bays provides cover and browse for black bear and other mammals.

Threats

The original longleaf pine habitat has been largely replaced by the faster growing, easier to generate loblolly and slash pine for wood product operations. Longleaf habitat also requires frequent fire to hold back competition from

hardwoods and to maintain the soil structure and nutrients to which longleaf pine is adapted.

Encroaching development and air quality regulations restrict the ability to conduct prescribed fires to maintain the remaining longleaf pine stands.



Aerial view of Carolina bays in Sumter County, degraded by drainage, road construction, and conversion to loblolly pine plantations.

Degradation and loss of wetlands of all types continues throughout the State as a result of development, agriculture, and forestry practices. It is estimated that 97 percent of Carolina bays have been altered in some manner.

The population of South Carolina is increasing rapidly in coastal areas, eliminating or degrading fish and wildlife habitats, especially wetland habitats.

Conservation Strategies

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in South Carolina is involved in various types of habitat restoration activities. We provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners. Projects are being focused in three areas:

- Longleaf pine restoration on private lands within the watershed of Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge. Longleaf pine restoration costs about \$200 per acre.
- Improvement of tidal wetlands along the coast. Wetland restoration averages \$200 per acre.
- Trout stream restoration in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Restoration of in-stream habitats cost approximately \$200,000 per mile.

Other work includes Atlantic white cedar bog restoration and invasive plant removal.



Volunteers participate in the week-long "Great English Ivy Pull-out" at W. Gordon Belser Arboretum in Columbia, SC.

Partners Program staff also provide technical assistance to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in implementation of Farm Bill conservation programs.

Partners

In addition to our private landowners, other partners include:

Bamberg Soil and Water
Conservation District

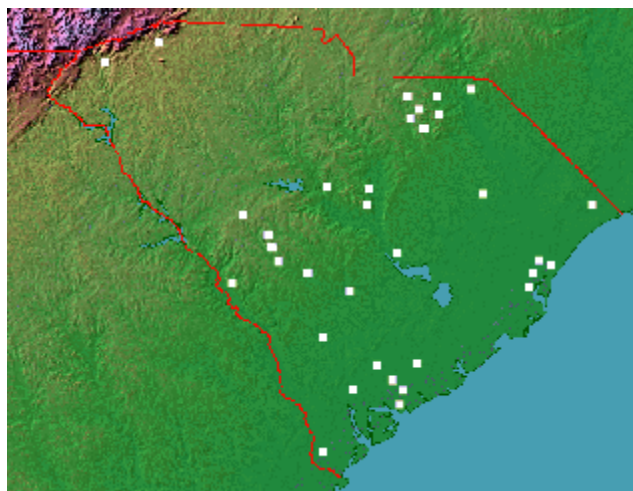
Ducks Unlimited
Greenlawn Baptist Church
Foothills Resource Conservation
and Development
National Audubon Society
South Carolina Department of
Corrections
South Carolina Department of
Natural Resources
South Carolina Waterfowl
Association
Telephone Pioneers of America
The Bishop Gravatt Center
The Nature Conservancy
University of South Carolina
Natural Resources Conservation
Service
Farm Service Agency

Accomplishments

In South Carolina the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program began in 1991. The earliest work involved enhancement of approximately 2,000 acres of beaver ponds with 41 cooperators. Since then the Partners Program has expanded to include many different habitat types including:

- Restored 198 acres of longleaf pine habitat.
- Restored 5 acres of Atlantic white cedar habitat.

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- Restored 3 acres for federally endangered plants
 - Restored 7 acres by removal of invasive plant species.
 - Restored 13 acres of Carolina bay wetland habitat.
 - Enhanced or restored 476 acres of coastal wetlands.
 - Restored 404 acres of wood stork habitat.
 - Restored 109 acres of other wetland habitats in the State.



Location map of Partners for Fish and Wildlife projects in South Carolina.

CONTACT



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